

THE CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS (CHURCH OF ST. THEOPHANO)
NEAR THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY APOSTLES
AT CONSTANTINOPLE

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THE Emperor Leo VI built a church in Constantinople as a memorial to his first wife Theophano and called it the Church of St. Theophano. Certain bishops objected to this dedication, and the name of the church was changed to that of All the Saints, so that it is by this name that the edifice is usually encountered in the sources. The church was joined to the great Church of the Holy Apostles; and this church, in turn, contained a small oratory of St. Theophano built by Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus. As a consequence of the change of the dedication, and of the existence so near each other (for a time) of two shrines of St. Theophano, there has been a certain amount of confusion and misunderstanding of the evidence on the part of modern scholars. The present study has been undertaken in order to clear up the difficulties which have, quite understandably, arisen.¹ The essential texts are the *Life of St. Theophano* by Nicephorus Gregoras² and a passage in the *Patria*³ which have not always been used in this connection, which show that the Church of All the

Saints and the Church of St. Theophano were the same building; and according to the *Life*, the church stood to the east of the Church of the Holy Apostles.

The other sources do not hint that the Church of St. Theophano and that of All the Saints are the same. Symeon Magister, a contemporary of Constantine VII, records that after Theophano's death, Leo VI purchased buildings near the Church of the Apostles, and built a Church of St. Theophano, and buried his wife there.⁴

The changed name of the church appears in a number of sources, but none of these happens to mention that the church had originally been called by another name. The *Book of Ceremonies* mentions the Church of All the Saints several times.⁵ The *Patria* records that Leo VI took material from St. Stephen's near the *Sigma* and used it in the Holy Apostles and in All the Saints.⁶ Cedrenus⁷ states that the dome of All the Saints fell in the earthquake of 1010. Antonius of Novgorod⁸ mentions the Church of All the Saints "beside the

¹ There are two modern studies of the material, that of J. Ebersolt, *Sanctuaires de Byzance* (Paris, 1921), p. 36, and that of R. Janin in *La Géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin*, I^{re} partie, *Le Siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique*, tome III, *Les Églises et les monastères* (Paris, 1953), pp. 253–254. Ebersolt was unable to disentangle the confusion because he apparently did not know all of the evidence. P. Janin sees the significance of the evidence, but there are relevant texts which he does not mention.

² Nicephorus Gregoras, *Hist. Byz.*, VI, 9, 1 (v. 1, p. 202, 7–14 Bonn ed.).

³ *Patria*, p. 281 ed. T. Preger, *Scr. orig. Const.*

⁴ Symeon Magister, *De Leone Basilii f.*, 5, Bonn ed., followed by Zonaras, XVI, 13, 10 (v. III, p. 446, 11–14 Bonn ed.), whose account in turn is copied by Ephraemius in his *Chronicle*, vv. 2644–2648, p. 116 Bonn ed. Symeon's

story is repeated (without the statement concerning the burial of St. Theophano) by Leo Grammaticus, p. 274, 9–11 Bonn ed., in *Theophanes Continuatus*, VI, 18, p. 364, 20–22 Bonn ed., and in *Georgius Monachus Continuatus*, *De Leone Basilii f.*, 25, p. 860, 12–14 Bonn ed. Cedrenus (II, p. 260, 4–6 Bonn ed.) describes the same event in a context which indicates that he reproduces, with some omissions, the account of *Georgius Monachus Continuatus*. The account of the event given in the redaction published by Istrin, *Chronicle of Georgius Hamartolus* (in Russian) (Petrograd, 1920–1930), II, p. 30, 35–36, is truncated. None of these sources indicates that the name of the church was later changed.

⁵ II, 6, p. 533, 21; II, 7, pp. 535, 13; 537, 5 and 13, Bonn ed.

⁶ P. 280, 17 ff. ed. Preger.

⁷ II, p. 456, 19–23 Bonn ed.

⁸ P. 28 ed. Chr. M. Loparev, *Pravoslav.*

Church of the Apostles." Mesarites⁹ says that the Church of All the Saints stood "quite close" (σύνεγγυς) to the Holy Apostles. Georgius Pachymeres¹⁰ states that in the reign of Andronicus II (1282–1328) the Church of All the Saints, which had been closed, was again put into use. In another passage¹¹ Pachymeres records that the earthquake of 1296 threw down "as much of the roof as was above the *bema* and above the middle of the building." The shock, he says, also threw down a statue of the Archangel Michael and the Emperor Michael VIII which stood on a column in front of the building. Nicephorus Gregoras, in his account of the same disaster,¹² mentions the fall of the same statue, but says that it stood in front of the Church of the Apostles. The Russian pilgrim Zosimus likewise places the statue in front of the Holy Apostles.¹³ Buondelmonti¹⁴ also places the statue in front of the Holy Apostles. Manuel Chrysoloras¹⁵ mentions a column which he says stood "at the right" of the Church of the Apostles. He does not further describe the column, so that we cannot tell whether it was that which bore the statues of the Archangel and of the Emperor. If it was the same monument, Manuel presumably meant that it stood on one's right as one left the Holy Apostles. The anonymous English pilgrim who visited Constantinople in the latter part of the twelfth century writes that the

Church of All the Saints was joined with the Holy Apostles, *mixta cum templo sanctorum Apostolorum*.¹⁶ Finally, Ducas records that the Church of All the Saints was demolished in 1390, along with other buildings, to provide stone for the strengthening of the Golden Gate.¹⁷

The location of All the Saints is thus quite plain. It stood alongside and to the east of the Holy Apostles, in such a way that the same statue could be said to stand "in front of" both the Holy Apostles and All the Saints. The relationship of the buildings is also made clear by the statements in the *Book of Ceremonies* that the emperor passed through the narthex of All the Saints to reach the *catechumena* of the Holy Apostles,¹⁸ and that after leaving the *bema* of the Holy Apostles he went through the "open court [*exaeron*]" of the apse of All the Saints, from which he departed "by the road which leads away from that place."¹⁹

In addition to the Church of St. Theophano, later All the Saints, there was an oratory (ἐκκλησίον) of St. Theophano in the *kyklion* of the Holy Apostles;²⁰ the *Book of Ceremonies* elsewhere, as has been noted above, always refers to what was originally the Church of St. Theophano as the *Church* (not the "oratory") of All the Saints.

There are two references to a church or oratory of St. Theophano which present a certain difficulty. In the *Patria*

Palestin. Sbornik, No. 51 (*Izdan. Imp. Pravoslav. Palestin. Obshch.*, XVII, pt. 3, 1899), translated by Mlle. M. Ehrhard, "Le Livre du pèlerin d'Antoine de Novgorod," *Romania*, LVIII (1932), pp. 60–61.

⁹ Ch. VIII, ed. A. Heisenberg, *Grabeskirche und Apostelkirche* (Leipzig, 1908), II, p. 19.

¹⁰ *De Andr. Pal.*, I, 13 (v. II, p. 40, 2–6 Bonn. ed.).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, III, 15 (v. II, p. 234, 12–22 Bonn. ed.).

¹² Cited above, n. 2.

¹³ Zosimus, *Life and Pilgrimage*, ed. Chr. M. Loparev, *Pravoslav. Palestin. Sbornik*, No. 24 (*Izdan. Imp. Pravoslav. Palestin. Obshch.*, VIII, pt. 3, 1889), p. 6, transl. by Mme. B. de Khitrow, *Itinéraires russes en Orient*, I, 1

(Geneva, 1889), pp. 203–204.

¹⁴ Migne, *P.G.*, CXXXIII, cols. 700–701 (the shorter redaction); G. Gerola, "Le vedute di Constantinopoli di Cristoforo Buondelmonti," *Studi bizantini*, III (1931), pp. 275–276.

¹⁵ *Epist. ad Ioannem Imp.*, Migne, *P.G.*, CLVI, col. 45 B–D.

¹⁶ The anonymous English pilgrim's description of Constantinople and of the Holy Land is edited by S. G. Mercati, *Rendiconti della Pontif. Accad. Rom. di Archeologia*, XII (1936), pp. 152–153, § 26.

¹⁷ *Historia Bizantina*, XIII, p. 47, 17 ff. Bonn. ed.

¹⁸ II, 7, p. 535, 13 Bonn. ed.

¹⁹ II, 6, p. 533, 20 ff. Bonn. ed.

²⁰ II, 7, p. 537, 15 and 22 Bonn. ed.

there is a statement (noted above) that Leo VI took material from St. Stephen's and used it in the Holy Apostles and in All the Saints.²¹ A little later in the collection²² there is a statement that "St. Theophano, outside the old 'conch' of the memorials [τὴν ἀγίαν Θεοφανὸν ἔξωθεν τῆς παλαιᾶς κόγχης τῶν μνημοθεσίων] Constantine the son of Leo, the Porphyrogenitus, built." It is not immediately clear what "the old 'conch' of the memorials" is. One MS. of the *Patria* expands the reference to "the memorials of the holy apostles" (τῶν μνημοθεσίων τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων), while another mentions the structure as "that of the tombs of the emperors at the holy apostles" (τὴν εἰς τὰ μνήματα τῶν βασιλέων εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους ἀποστόλους).²³ The text can (independently of other considerations) be taken to mean that Constantine VII built a church or chapel of St. Theophano "outside the old apse" of the Mausoleum of Justinian; it would be quite possible for the Mausoleum to be called "the memorials," and one MS. indeed (see the critical apparatus cited above) writes of "the tombs of the emperors," apparently meaning the Mausoleum. This location represents the prevailing view, adopted, for example, by Ebersolt; it is based principally on the circumstance that the Mausoleum of Justinian had a κόγχη.²⁴ If this was a church or chapel built by Constantine VII outside the apse of the Mausoleum of Justinian, it cannot be identical with the Church of St. Theophano (later All the Saints) which Leo VI built alongside the Holy Apostles, since the Church of St. Theophano, as has been seen, could not have stood near the Mausoleum of Justinian. In this case, this church or chapel could not be identical with the oratory in the *kyklion* of the Holy Apostles, but would have to be a third shrine dedicated to the empress.

²¹ P. 280, 17 ff. ed. Preger.

²² P. 282, 1–7 ed. Preger.

²³ See the critical apparatus in Preger's edition, p. 282, note on line 2 of the text.

²⁴ *De Cer.*, p. 644, 2 Bonn ed.; cf. Ebersolt,

However, this passage in the *Patria* may very plausibly be interpreted as a reference, somewhat cryptic and garbled, to the oratory in the *kyklion*. It is evident, as a glance at the critical apparatus of the text will show, that the passage was extensively retouched by various scribes and editors, and the variety of the versions shows that there existed a number of quite different opinions as to what the memorial in question was. An analysis of the passage, and comparison of it with other evidence, will, however, make it possible to determine how much of its information is sound. Κόγχη might well be a term used in this passage in the *Patria* to describe the *synthronon* of the Holy Apostles. The κόγχη, the apse, was closely associated, both architecturally and liturgically, with the *thysiasterion*.²⁵ In churches in which the priests' seats and the bishop's throne were built round the wall of the apse or κόγχη, the term "conch" could well come to be applied to the seats themselves as well as to the whole apse. When, in other types of churches, the sanctuary and its *synthronon*, instead of being placed in the eastern wall, stood free in the center of the church, as it did in the Holy Apostles, the term "conch" might very logically continue to be applied to it. In this case the structure built by Constantine VII "outside the old conch" would be the oratory of St. Theophano, which, as we know from the *Book of Ceremonies*, stood in the *kyklion* under the *synthronon* of the Holy Apostles.²⁶ The "memorials" thus would be the burials of the three apostles in the altar, possibly also the tombs of Chrysostom and Gregory. The "conch" might well be called "old" because it dated back to the time of Justinian, and was not (as it might have been) rebuilt when Con-

op. cit. (cited above, n. 1), p. 36, n. 5.

²⁵ See Du Cange's excellent discussion of *concha* in *Constantinopolis Christiana* (Paris, 1680), Book III, pp. 43–45.

²⁶ II, 7, p. 537, 14–15 Bonn ed.

stantine VII added his oratory. Symeon Metaphrastes²⁷ states that Justinian, when he built his Church of the Apostles, refrained (out of reverence for the bodies of the apostles) from disturbing the altar. Constantine VII may well have had the same feeling when he made his alterations.

This interpretation is supported by another passage in the *Patria* in which, in the course of the quasi-legendary account of the construction of the Holy Apostles by Theodora, it is stated that "the memorial [μνημοθέσιον] of St. Theophano, the great Constantine built."²⁸ This is of course Constantine VII, not Constantine the Great.²⁹ That the reference is to the oratory in the *kyklion* is indicated by the circumstance that the writer has just mentioned the altar and the *bema*, and that he goes on immediately to mention the Mausoleum of Justinian, which he calls τὸ ἐξώθεν μνημοθέσιον. This implies that the memorial of St. Theophano is inside the Holy Apostles, and likewise suggests that it was associated with the altar and the *bema*. The terminology employed also suggests once more that the μνημοθέσια mentioned in connection with the "old conch" are the tombs of the apostles. The Mausoleum of Justinian would be τὸ ἐξώθεν μνημοθέσιον as distinguished from the tombs of the apostles inside the church.

The passage in the *Patria* which places the memorial of St. Theophano "outside the old 'conch' of the memorials" thus appears to have been misunderstood, and altered in various ways; some of these alterations can now be perceived. The reference to the "conch" would be one source of confusion, since this could be mistakenly taken to refer to the apse of

the Mausoleum of Justinian instead of the *synthronon* of the church itself; this indeed seems to have happened in MS. B, which reads τὴν εἰς τὰ μνήματα τῶν βασιλέων εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους ἀποστόλους. The contrary view, represented in MS. H, interpreted the "memorials" as those of the three apostles. Still another view left the reference simply to "the memorials" or even "the memorial" (the latter presumably meaning the whole Church of the Apostles and its precincts, viewed as a memorial). What the original text read, apparently cannot be determined.

The *Life of St. Theophano* seems to be inaccurate in one respect. Nicephorus Gregoras states that the empress' body was originally placed, temporarily, in the Holy Apostles, and that when Leo was persuaded to change the name of his church of St. Theophano to All the Saints, he transferred the body to the monastery of St. Constantine, which the empress had built. Symeon Magister and Zonaras, however, as has been noted above, state that Theophano's body was buried in the church which Leo built; and during and immediately following the reign of Constantine VII her body is recorded in the Mausoleum of Constantine by the list of imperial tombs in the *Book of Ceremonies*³⁰ and by the anonymous lists of the imperial tombs.³¹ The empress' sarcophagus at the Church of the Apostles is also mentioned by the ninth-century anonymous *Life of the empress* published by E. Kurtz.³² The first witness other than Nicephorus who places the empress' remains in the monastery of St. Constantine is Stephen of Novgorod, who was shown them there ca. 1350,³³ and the Russian pilgrim Zosimus³⁴ saw her body in the same place

²⁷ *Vita S. Timothei*, 11–12 = Migne, P.G., CXIV, col. 772 B–C.

²⁸ P. 288, 8–10 ed. Preger.

²⁹ Constantine VII is called ὁ μέγας in *De Cer.*, I, 96, p. 433, 13–14 Bonn ed.

³⁰ P. 643, 10 Bonn ed.

³¹ See the list published by Du Cange, *Const. Christ.*, Book IV, pp. 109–110, and that published by Banduri, *Imperium Orientale* (Paris,

1711), I, pt. 2, p. 122, reprinted by I. Bekker in Codinus, *Exc. de antiq. Constantinop.* (Bonn, 1843), p. 204, lines 13–15. See also the passage in the *De Cerimoniis*, II, 6, p. 533, 11 Bonn ed.

³² *Zapiski Imp. Akad. Nauk, istor.-filol. otd.*, ser. VIII, vol. III, pt. 2 (1898), p. 23, 1–2.

³³ B. de Khitrowo, *Itin. russes* (cited above, n. 13), p. 123.

³⁴ *Loc. cit.* (above n. 13).

in 1419–21 (he calls the monastery *Philanthropos*). There was apparently some confusion as to the empress' resting places, and it may be that the sarcophagus continued to be shown at the Mausoleum of Constantine even after the transfer of the body to the monastery. Such confusion appears clearly in the gloss on the notice of the building of the memorial to St. Theophano at p. 282, 1–7 of the *Patria*. This gloss, which occurs in only one MS., reads ἡτις κατέκειτο εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους Ἀποστόλους, ἡτις μέχρι τῆς σήμερον ἀναπηγάξει κρουνοὺς θαυμάτων μεγίστων ἐν τῇ γυναικείᾳ μονῇ τῆς εἰς ὄνομα τιμωμένης τοῦ μεγάλου καὶ ἁγίου Κωνσταντίνου, "she was buried at the Holy Apostles, she sends forth fountains of the greatest miracles to this day in the women's convent of the church which is honored by the name of the great and holy Constantine." These words might be taken to make a consistent statement, but it seems more likely that the two clauses are inconsistent. In the former sense, the statement would be made that Theophano was originally buried at the Holy Apostles, but that she was later transferred to the convent at St. Constantine's, where she continues "to this day" to work miracles. In the latter sense, which is favored by the absence of a conjunction between the clauses, the statements are made (1) that the empress was buried at the Holy Apostles, and, by inference, is still buried there; and (2) that she works miracles "to this day" at St. Constantine's. The second clause appears to represent an addition made to the first, with no effort to effect a proper grammatical junction.

The apparent inconsistency of Ni-

cephorus' information on this point is apparently to be attributed to the circumstance that he used material furnished for the purpose by the nuns of St. Constantine, who would naturally be both prone to believe and eager to claim that their patroness' body had rested in their establishment for as long a period as possible.

If we discount the statement of Nicephorus Gregoras, what appears to have happened is that Theophano's body was, as Symeon Magister and Zonaras write, first laid in the Church of St. Theophano; that it was subsequently placed in the Mausoleum of Constantine, most likely when Leo was forced to change the dedication of his church from St. Theophano to All the Saints; and that at some time after the reign of Constantine VIII (the time when the latest of the lists of imperial tombs was compiled) and before the visit of Stephen of Novgorod *ca.* 1350 it was transferred to the monastery of St. Constantine.

The date of the empress' death was for a time uncertain, some scholars assigning it to 16 Dec. 892, others to 16 Dec. 894, all on the basis of texts which gave incomplete or conflicting data.³⁵ However, the account of the empress' death in the *Vita Euthymii*, which was not published until 1888, makes it seem practically (though not absolutely) certain that she died on 10 Nov. 893.³⁶ How soon after Theophano's death Leo VI began to build the memorial church for her is not clear; Nicephorus Gregoras says that he built the church "after a time," which would seem to indicate that the work was begun at the earliest in 894.³⁷

are various others dealing with relics preserved in All the Saints. These texts, which are not concerned with the history, location or structure of the building, may be found in Du Cange, *Const. Christ.*, Book IV, pp. 130–131; reference may also be made to Kurtz's brief discussion of the history of the church in his publication of the *Lives* of St. Theophano, *op. cit.* (above n. 32), pp. 63–65.

³⁵ See E. de Muralt, *Essai de chronographie byzantine* (St. Petersburg, 1855), p. 474, who adopts the latter date.

³⁶ See C. de Boor's discussion of the date in his edition of the *Vita Euthymii* (Berlin, 1888), pp. 103–105, and Kurtz's note on the *Vita* by Nicephorus Gregoras, *Zapiski* (cited above, n. 32), p. 58, n. 27.

³⁷ In addition to the texts cited above, there